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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

September 28, 2005

The Honorable Carlos Gutierrez
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Gutierrez:

Pursuant to its authority under Rule XXV(k)(1) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, Section 101 of S. Res 445 (108th Congress), and Section 11(e) of S. Res 50 (109th Congress), the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs has initiated an investigation into the Nation's preparedness for, and response to, Hurricane Katrina. To aid in this investigation, we respectfully request that the Commerce Department provide the committee (in accordance with the attached definitions and instructions) with the information and documents requested below.

1. Describe each of the Department/Agency's roles, responsibilities and authorities in providing emergency support functions under the National Response Plan. With respect to each specific role, responsibility or authority, please identify:

- a. The statutory, regulatory or other source for that role, responsibility or authority;
- b. The component or components within the Department involved in acting pursuant to that authority or discharging that role and responsibility;
- c. The key personnel involved in acting pursuant to that authority or discharging that role and responsibility;

To the extent that the sources identified in response to subpart (a) are not publicly available, please provide copies of them.

2. To the extent not provided in response to the previous question, please describe any other roles, responsibilities and authorities of the Department/Agency in preparing for and responding to a domestic emergency. With respect to each specific role, responsibility or authority, please identify:

- a. The statutory, regulatory or other source for that role, responsibility or authority;
- b. The component or components within the Department involved in acting pursuant to that authority or discharging that role and responsibility;
- c. The key personnel involved in acting pursuant to that authority or discharging that role and responsibility;

To the extent that the sources identified in response to subpart (a) are not publicly available, please provide copies of them.

3. (a) Was the Department asked to act pursuant to its authorities, play any role, or discharge any of its responsibilities specifically in preparation for or response to Katrina? If so, please provide a detailed description of what the Department was asked to do, by whom it was asked, when it was asked to do it, what specifically it did and when it did it. Please also include the names and titles of key personnel involved in the request or response.

(b) To the extent not included in response to subsection (a), please describe any other actions the Department took pursuant to its authorities, or any other role or responsibilities it assumed specifically in preparation for or response to Katrina. Please be specific as to what the Department did, when it did it and the names and titles of key personnel involved.

(c) To the extent not included in response to subsections (a) and (b), please describe any other actions the Department considered taking or offered to take pursuant to its authorities, or any other role or responsibilities it considered assuming or offered to assume specifically in preparation for or response to Katrina. Please be specific as to what the Department considered or offered, when it considered or offered it, why such actions weren't taken or such roles or responsibilities weren't assumed, and the names and titles of key personnel involved.

4. (a) Provide all forecasts and predictions of the expected hurricane frequency and intensity of Atlantic hurricanes for the 2005 hurricane season made to the public or to the meteorological community by NOAA during 2005.

(b) Provide all forecasts and predictions, and any presentations or communications of such forecasts or predictions, of the expected hurricane frequency and intensity of Atlantic hurricanes for the 2005 hurricane season provided to FEMA or any other Federal, or state or local official or emergency management or response agency by NOAA during 2005. Please identify the date, the NOAA official who provided the information, and the recipient.

5. (a) All forecasts and predictions of the expected track, intensity, and related characteristics (such as height of the storm surge) of Hurricane Katrina, beginning with its designation as a tropical storm, and made available to the public or to the meteorological community.

(b) All forecasts and predictions of the expected track, intensity, and related characteristics (such as height of the storm surge) of Hurricane Katrina, beginning with its designation by NOAA as a tropical storm, and any presentations or communications of such forecasts or predictions, or the consequences thereof, provided to DoD or any other Federal, or Gulf Coast state or local official or emergency management or response agency by NOAA. Please identify the date and time such information was provided, the NOAA official who provided the information, and the recipient and provide copies of any documents or communications.

6. All notes, recordings, transcripts or other records of videoconferences, teleconferences, or other multi-party exchanges of information involving NOAA personnel and federal, state, and

local officials or emergency management personnel concerning the track, intensity, characteristics of, or consequences of Hurricane Katrina between August 23, 2005 and landfall on the Gulf Coast.

7. All documents related to the policy, planning and guidance for port re-openings for the National, Area, District and local units in the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. These documents include, but are not limited to, emergency Aids to Navigation repairs, and salvage and removal of wrecks.

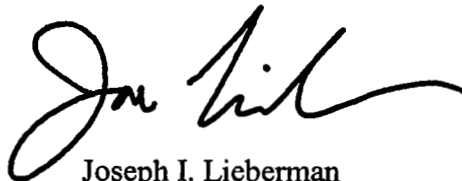
We request that these documents and information be provided as they become available but no later than October 27, 2005. If you or your staff have any questions concerning this request please contact Tom Eldridge of the Committee's majority staff at 202-224- 4751 or Dave Berick of the Committee's minority staff at 202-224-2627.

We thank you and your staff in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
Chairman



Joseph I. Lieberman
Ranking Member